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Text of Remarks  
by

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Washington, D.C.

Before  
Dedication Ceremonies

Miksch Tobacco Shop of Old Salem Restoration  
Winston-Salem, North Carolina  
Friday, April 22, 1960

It is a privilege -- and a very pleasant one indeed -- to participate in the dedication ceremonies taking place at the Old Salem Restoration today.

I say this for a number of reasons. Together with most Americans, I place a high value on these reconstructions of the past. This is a fine thing to do. It enriches all of us. I think the highest praise is due the people who have given so unselfishly of their time and thought, care and money to this splendid work of preservation.

As a tobacco man, of course, I find special significance and more than the usual interest in the fact that this old building began its career as a tobacconist's shop -- a shop approved and supported by the Moravian community of idealistic and God-fearing people.

We in the Tobacco Institute, an organization of manufacturers who produce almost all the cigarettes, snuff, smoking and chewing tobacco made in the United States, think it most appropriate that North Carolina has the oldest surviving American building in which tobacco was made and sold.

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This old tobacco shop will stand as a symbol of the beginnings of a great industry. How fitting that it stands in North Carolina!...

This state, which began humbly as a producer of tobacco, now grows more leaf and manufactures more cigarettes than any other part of the Union. Today this little shop is only one of many thousand retail outlets in North Carolina alone!

How fitting it is also that this shop was first opened in the Moravian community of a people with high ideals, with a deep sense of community responsibility combined with a great respect for the rights and freedoms of the individual, and with a determined desire to encourage the search for truth through religion and universal education.

I think we can be sure that those colonial Moravians who patronized this tobacco shop in their quiet little community would be proud today to know that their sense of responsibility and their leadership in education and spiritual matters laid a firm foundation that was to persist in this area into the present day.

We see it not only here in Winston-Salem where your major industry demonstrates day after day and year after year its responsibilities in terms of both community improvement and advancement and in aid to educational and cultural institutions. It can be seen also among the other tobacco growers, manufacturers, and sellers in North Carolina and throughout the United States.

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Yes, I am sure that the founders of this Moravian community in which we stand today would be proud of the type of industrial, educational and community leadership that is exemplified by the works that we are commemorating.

It is well that we have such restorations as Old Salem to remind us of the heritage on which our American life is founded.

As long as this shop stands here it will take all who visit it back over the years to a sturdy young German emigrant -- Johann Matthew Miksch. It was his tobacco shop. Folks just called him Matthew. Let's for a while imagine ourselves back there with Matthew...

How fitting it is also that this shop was first opened in the Moravian. During his travels abroad and in this country he lived in places where practically every adult used snuff or smoked pipes. Tobacco, then as now, was an important part of the daily routine of living. Matthew must have observed that tobacco, which writers of old called "the divine herb," had a soothing effect on people. It gave them contentment -- made them feel more congenial.

As Old Salem's sole tobacconist, Matthew undoubtedly felt that his trade was something much more important than that of a routine shopkeeper.

He was being socially useful in providing a commodity that brought pleasure to the people of his community. Then, too, as was generally true of tobacconists in the later colonial period, Matthew did much more than just sell snuff and pipe tobacco. He also cured leaf, processed it into snuff, prepared smoking tobacco, stored his supplies and packaged his goods. Matthew, in short, was a one-man industry...

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It's conceivable that Matthew, a one-man industry when he left this world, must be getting many a smile these days as he looks down from his heaven and sees what he would have to contend with today.

Folks back in those days who were Matthew's customers liked his store and his products. And if some snuff user or pipe smoker ever had

any complaint about Matthew's tobaccos or snuffs, it was usually from someone who thought his snuff could be just a little might moister...or his tobacco just a wee bit drier. Matthew never had to listen to witch-hunting legions shouting about the imagined evils of tobacco. His ears were spared the calls of those who keep trying to link cancer or heart trouble to the use of tobacco.

Sure, Matthew could remember that even in his time there would be some complaints about social uses of tobacco. Even then this opposition wasn't new. It had started in England some 350 years ago. Later, doctors thought tobacco had such great curative values that they opposed the use for pleasure of this medicinal herb. And from time to time attacks would be renewed. I guess tobacco has been accused of causing about every ailment and of curing about every ailment. It has even been accused of causing much pleasure.

So even that far back Matthew knew that there was something seriously wrong with these medical arguments against smoking. Wasn't he also watching the spectacular rate at which the use of tobacco was growing? And wasn't he watching smokers generally living happily to ripe old ages?

Yes, and Matthew, from his perch up there, looked down on some early hysteria in this country, too. He'd had his laughs at the flare-ups of opposition to the use of tobacco in the 1880's and '90's and again in the 1920's. A lot of prohibitory and restrictive laws were passed. Then, by 1927, they were all rescinded, as the people made their choice to have tobacco.

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any co. Now what else is amazing to one-man-industry Matthew up there?

Taxes! To Matthew, taxes were something you only worried about if you owned a lot of property. Matthew must get a snicker or two as he sees today's tobacco users paying \$2.7 billion in taxes to treasuries of cities, states and the United States. Several pennies at a time on each tobacco product mounts up to this \$2.7 billion -- a staggering sum to old Matthew.

Something else Matthew marvels down at. Today's competition! Back then Matthew had the only tobacco shop for miles around. Tobacconists' shops were few and far between anywhere in the colonies. Today, some million and a half outlets supply a growing consumer demand. Except for currency, nothing passes more frequently across dealers' counters in this country than tobacco.

Inventory was no problem, either, in Matthew's time. A tobacconist stocked a relatively small amount of goods. Today shelves are filled with all forms of manufactured tobacco, including several dozen brands of cigarettes -- those new contraptions that were not even known in Matthew's time down here. And in 1960 about 500 billion cigarettes will be manufactured in the United States.

Just a few thousand people were active in the production and shipping of tobacco in Matthew's time... Now the figure runs to many millions. And the annual farm production runs over a billion pounds... America has long been the world's largest manufacturer of tobacco.

The retail tobacco trade in the America of the 1770's was not highly rated commercially. In 1959 the total of sales, tax included, was close to \$7 billion in the United States.

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Now, for a few minutes, may we let Matthew just sit quietly up there and listen... There are some hard facts... not guesses, mind you... hard facts we should all look at because of their bearing on the use of tobacco -- particularly cigarettes.

The greatest advance in cigarette smoking in this country came during the past half century. The figure is around forty times the number consumed since just before World War I. On a per capita basis we consume more tobacco than any other people. And what is the health record of Americans? Our health is collectively better than it's ever been; we live longer than our forebears; the stature of the newer generation is greater. Some 25 years has been added to our average life span in the past half-century.

I know, we all know, that there are many reasons for this improved health status: better medical care and drugs, scientific advances in diet, sanitation, housing, working conditions. But it must be clear that the extensive use of tobacco, particularly cigarettes over the past few decades, has not shortened our life span as some people would have you believe.

The tobacco industry is just as interested in matters of good health as is any other conscientious business group. And we are taking vigorous, practical steps in the field of scientific research on all aspects of tobacco and its use, a research program that has been going on for many years. Through research we can learn facts to depend on, rather than relying on opinion.

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Some people in legislative, medical and educational circles are too impatient, too unwilling to wait until the evidence is in. Some of these people have proposed measures to curb, if not to destroy the tobacco

industry. To them, the current witch is tobacco. They would have you live now, for a few minutes, may we let Watson just sit quietly up there in a world where you couldn't smoke or use tobacco in various other forms.

Some of them have attempted to have legislation passed which is highly discriminatory, downright silly and sometimes even dishonest. What has prevented them from carrying out their programs is the good, common sense of the majority of people to whom tobacco is a boon -- not a bane.

Americans have made it clear, very clear, that they do not intend since just before World War I, on a per capita basis we consume more tobacco to be frightened away from smoking. That is a matter of their own free will, their own free choice. They are maintaining a tradition which has existed with successive generations over the past several centuries.

Finally, there is one factor I should like to comment on briefly.

The business of tobacco is not confined to a few states or limited industrial areas. It affects the economic pattern of the whole country and, in one form or another, touches the lives of all Americans.

Thousands of farmers other than tobacco farmers and millions of productive workers in three-quarters of our fifty states supply materials and equipment to tobacco manufacturers. Many other people are in services essential to the industry. There is a crisscross of industrial activity in this country, all directed to the needs of manufacturers and tobacco consumers. The next time you buy a package of cigarettes or any other tobacco product take a good look at it and try to figure what went into it in the form of labor, of machinery, of people behind the machines, and of services which made the product readily available to you.

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industry. If that, the current witch is tobacco. They would have you live

The industry has lived through a series of attacks, some of them in a world where you couldn't smoke or use tobacco in restaurants, hotels, very intolerant ones, too. It has grown stronger through the years. It has survived many attacks and regulations, and it will continue to grow. I make that confident prediction on the basis of history. The use of tobacco is a fixed part of our lives. It helps us to adjust ourselves to the quick pace of the day. It mellows our daily living. Just as the settlers in the old Moravian town of Salem -- a word which means "peace" -- made use of tobacco as one of the quiet joys of living, so today the 60 million and more Americans who enjoy tobacco in various forms find in it a comfort, a relaxation not provided by any other product of nature.

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productive workers in three-quarters of our thirty states supply materials

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